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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

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A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

AUG 7 Issue #92
May 1979

1979 HONOR AWARDS CEREMONY.....The 33rd Annual Honor Awards Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, May 23, at the Sylvan Theater, Washington Monument Grounds, at 10:30 a.m. In case of rain, the program will be conducted indoors at the Departmental Auditorium on Constitution Avenue, between 12th and 13th Streets, N. W.

Secretary Bergland will present 93 awards to USDA employees for Distinguished and Superior Service. The program will include music by the United States Army Band, presentation of the Colors by the Joint Armed Forces Color Guard, and a principal address by Senator Thomas Eagleton. (Contact: John Kizler, OP, ext. 76977).

1980 APPROPRIATIONS ACT.....The House Appropriations Committee has announced its schedule for full committee and floor action on the 1980 Appropriation bills. Full committee markup on the Department of Agriculture and Related Agencies Bill is scheduled for May 30 and floor action is scheduled for June 20. Subcommittee markup on the Interior Bill (Forest Service) is scheduled for June 4; Full committee markup June 21 and floor action June 27. We have no word yet on the Senate schedule. (Contact: John Mottershead, OBPE, ext. 74654).

OMB CIRCULAR NO. A-117.....Circular A-117 (Management Improvement and Use of Evaluation in the Executive Branch) was issued on March 23. This Circular provides guidance on management improvement initiatives designed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of program operations in the Executive Branch. It also emphasizes the importance of the role of evaluation in overall management improvement and the budget process.

This Circular supersedes and rescinds Circulars A-44 (Revised) and A-113. (Contact: C. R. Hanna, Management Staff, ext. 76111).

GAO REPORT ON COUNTY LEVEL FIELD STRUCTURE.....GAO has recently completed its study of USDA entitled "Colocating Agriculture Field Offices - More Can Be Done". Copies of the report have been distributed to agencies for comment. These are due by May 22 for incorporation in the Department's statement to Congress on action taken on the GAO recommendations. (Contact: Frank DiGialleonardo, Management Staff, ext. 76010).

OMB CIRCULAR A-76.....OMB released the revised Circular A-76 (Policies for Acquiring Commercial or Industrial Products and Services Needed by the Government) and the supplementary Cost Comparison Handbook, on March 29. These are effective on May 1. Within 120 days of the effective date, a revised 5 AR 600 reflecting these changes will be issued. (Contact: Gwen Powers, Management Staff, ext. 76983).

INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE IN USDA.....The industrial hygiene capability of the Office of Safety and Health Management is increasing with the addition of two members: Ms. Penny Goodstein and Mr. Neil Davis. Ms. Goodstein has extensive experience in the field of medical technology and has a Master of Science in Public Health from the University of North Carolina. She is currently the industrial hygienist at a major DOD installation. Mr. Davis has a Masters degree in environmental health from the University of Cincinnati and a Masters degree in epidemiology from Harvard University. He has compliance experience with OSHA and industrial hygiene program experience with another Federal agency. The addition of these staff members will allow OSHM to move forward with a long range program as well as being able to respond to the numerous requests for assistance in the field. (Contact: John Teske, OSHM, 472-2320).

DOMESTIC INFORMATION DISPLAY SYSTEM.....The Executive Office of the President, working with NASA and the Bureau of Census, has developed a graphic analytical display method called the Domestic Information Display System (DIDS). Originally intended for use by the President and his staff to evaluate domestic policy matters, the system is now available for use with inter-agency supplied data bases.

DIDS operates on display and processing equipment located at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Beltsville. The system provides analysis of statistical data displayed on a city, county, state, or national map and geographic areas of particular interest can be "zoomed" in on for more detail. There are currently 17 Federal offices participating in DIDS, with over 800 data bases in operation. The DIDS Technical Committee is now evaluating terminal sites in downtown Washington for use by project participants.

The Information Systems and Planning Division, O&F, is the contact point for USDA. (Contact: Roxanne Williams, O&F, ext. 72118)

NEW GSA REGIONAL OFFICE.....GSA has announced the establishment of a new Regional Office in Philadelphia to be created by dividing the present Region 3 in Washington into two separate and equal regional offices - Region 3 in Philadelphia and the National Capital Area Region in Washington.

The new Region 3 will be responsible for carrying out GSA's functions in Pennsylvania, Delaware, West Virginia and those areas of Maryland and Virginia not included in the National Capital Area region.

The National Capital Area region will be responsible for the District of Columbia, Prince George's and Montgomery counties in Maryland, the City of Alexandria, and Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William counties in Virginia.

This change will be effective on October 1, 1979. (Contact: Archie Morris, O&F, ext. 75225).

INCREASED CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST - FEDERAL GRANTS ADMINISTRATION.....

Congressional pressure is building for more specific administrative legislation to be used by Federal executive agencies in administering Federal assistance type programs. Senator Roth recently introduced legislation (S. 878) that would implement recommendations of the Federal Paperwork Commission on the administration of grants and agreements and a similar bill (H.R. 1907) has been introduced in the House by Representative Au Coin. Senator Danforth has followed up the Roth bill with an even more specific grants administration bill (S. 904) that will mandate application and audit procedures and will allow small grantees to opt for some form of increased general revenue sharing if they receive less than \$25,000 in other types of Federal aid programs. Much of this type of legislation may be premature in light of the current study of Federal assistance delivery systems now being carried out by OMB under the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-224). USDA agencies with grant and/or agreement type programs should stay abreast of this kind of proposed legislation so that we will be able to fully assess the impact on our programs, if and when we are asked for our views. (Contact: Don Manns, O&F, ext. 75630)

EEO Evaluation and Planning System.....The first of a series of three training courses on the Department's new uniform system of evaluating and planning for EEO actions was held on April 9 thru 11.

More than 110 participants representing nearly all of the agencies and staff offices of USDA attended this three day session at the Van Ness Campus of the University of D.C. (UDC)

Based on student comments and daily evaluations, the overall response to the concept method was very enthusiastic.

The participants will be spending the next two months implementing the system and assistance in this effort will be provided by a task force consisting of staff members from OEO, the Management Staff and Mark Battle Associates.

The second training session is tentatively scheduled for the week of June 2nd. (Contact: Jackie Sutton, OEO, ext. 77813)

WOMEN'S WEEK.....USDA Women's Week activities begin at 11:30 Monday morning, May 14 with a ceremony in Jefferson Auditorium. Judge Rita Davidson, first women Associate Judge on the Maryland Court of Appeals will be the speaker. The week will conclude with a ceremony in the Auditorium at 10:00 am Friday with an address by Sara Weddington, former USDA General Counsel and now Special Assistant to the President. Management Council members are requested to assure appropriate representation by agency management at the ceremonies. Other activities during the week include workshops or career counseling, self assessment, communication skills and breaking into management. (Contact: Marjory Hart, OEO, ext. 72727)

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES.....The proportion of permanent, full time general schedule women and minorities in USDA increased slightly in the first six months of FY 1979. EEO Tracking and Evaluation System data indicate women accounted for 25.96 percent of all PFT GS employees in March 1979 compared to 25.78 percent in October 1978. Minorities increased from 10.62 percent to 10.82 percent during the same period.

In terms of total numbers, women hold 414 (4.08 percent) of the 10,139 PFT GS positions at grades 13 through 18. Minorities hold 481 (4.74 percent). The average grade for men is 9.74; for women, 6.04. The average grade for minorities is 7.41. (Contact: Jackie Sutton, OEO, ext. 77813)

OLDER AMERICANS.....May is Older Americans Month and HEW is expected to announce the final governmentwide regulations to implement the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. Federal departments and agencies will have 120 days to propose specific rules for carrying out the Act. (Contact: William Payne, OEO, ext. 77327).

OUTREACH SEMINAR.....The third in a series of five "Outreach 79" seminars will be held at the University of New Mexico on June 7 and 8. These sessions are designed to open lines of communication between USDA program managers and those served by the programs. (Contact: James Frazier, OEO, ext. 74256).

BARRIER AWARENESS.....President Carter has proclaimed the third week in May as National Architectural Barrier Awareness Week. All employees are encouraged to help identify and remove barriers that keep handicapped and older persons from fully participating in society. (Contact: James Frazier, OEO, ext. 74256).

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES.....Deadline and publication dates for the next seven months are as follows:

<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Publication</u>
June 6	June 11
July 11	July 16
August 8	August 13
September 5	September 10
October 10	October 15
November 7	November 12
December 5	December 10

Articles of interest to management officials of the Department should be submitted to Neil I. Van Vliet, Management Staff, Room 115-A. All items submitted for publication must be approved at the appropriate agency or staff office level prior to submission.